



For Immediate Release
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April 14, 2003

Redlands Call Reduction Extended

GLENWOOD SPRINGS, CO – A lack of available water in the Gunnison River basin prior to the spring run-off period has prompted the Colorado River Water Conservation District to come to an agreement with Redlands Water and Power Authority to extend a reduction of Redlands' senior water rights through the end of April. The start of agricultural irrigation season comes about one month prior to when spring run-off begins in earnest and a shortfall of available water has prompted an extension of earlier arrangements between the two parties.

In this agreement, the River District will compensate Redlands for revenues lost by their diminished generation capacity and pay for any power that must be purchased to operate their irrigation pumping system. Redlands has cooperatively agreed to operate its hydroelectric generation system at reduced capacity since last summer's drought began, and completely eliminated its winter demand for the benefit of increased storage in upstream reservoirs.

Redlands Water and Power operates a hydroelectric generation system on the Gunnison River, close to its confluence with the Colorado River. The plant generates power to operate an irrigation pumping system that lifts water from the Gunnison River to irrigate lands within their district. When there is surplus energy generated, it is sold to offset the costs of operating this system. Redlands' water rights are large enough and senior enough to make them a controlling force on the Gunnison River.

The water that can be stored from this arrangement will reside in a number of reservoirs throughout the basin, including the Aspinall Unit reservoirs (Blue Mesa, Morrow Point and Crystal), Taylor Park and Silverjack reservoirs. Current storage levels in these reservoirs is very low and the extra storage will be beneficial for recovery of crucial stored water supplies within the basin.

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